

REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
AND RECORD OF ACTION

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June 24, 2003

FROM: JAMES A. FELTEN, Public Health Programs Administrator
Department of Public Health

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO CONTRACT WITH VICTOR VALLEY ANIMAL
PROTECTIVE LEAGUE TO IMPOUND AND DISPOSE OF STRAY ANIMALS

RECOMMENDATION: Approve Amendment No. 1 to Contract No. 00-619 with Victor Valley Animal Protective League to impound and dispose of stray animals on a fee per animal basis for the period July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004 increasing the total amount from \$100,000 annually to \$110,000.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The County of San Bernardino has been contracting with the Victor Valley Animal Protective League (VVAPL) for more than eighteen years to provide animal shelter services. The Department of Public Health (DPH) utilizes contract shelters in outlying unincorporated areas of the County where the County does not own or operate a shelter. These facilities make it easier for residents to retrieve impounded animals and reduce travel time for field officers. The shelters also house, quarantine and process animals in accordance with County ordinance and State law. Fees charged by contract shelters cover such services as rabies quarantine, stray and licensed animal impound, and animal euthanasia.

The services covered by this contract were not obtained through a competitive process. DPH has been unable to identify other facilities located in the Victor Valley area that are capable of, or willing to, contract with the County for the required service.

The VVAPL provided services from 1990 through June 1999 with no fee increase during that nine-year period. Fees were increased approximately 22 percent for FY 1999/2000 based on the 1999 change in State law increasing the required basic impound period from 72 hours to a minimum of 96 hours and a maximum of 168 hours depending upon the hours the shelter is open to the public.

On August 15, 2000, the Board of Supervisors approved the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) in order to locate other sheltering facilities in the desert and valley regions. Responses were received from three vendors as a result. The first was Windward in Hesperia. After discussions with Windward, it was mutually decided that Windward would not be an ideal location for an animal shelter because the facility operated as a boarding kennel for owned dogs. Expanding the facility to include stray animals would require an entire change in operations, the construction of an additional kennel to house the stray animals, and the creation of procedures to impound and process the animals brought in by the County. A second response was received by a

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facility in the Central Valley, however transporting animals from the high desert would not be cost effective and the facility was constructed of wood which was not acceptable due to many health issues. Additionally, this facility was in the process of converting to a grooming school. As a result of the RFP, the County continued to contract with VVAPL and entered into an agreement with the third proposer, the Barstow Humane Society.

The VVAPL Contract for FY 2000/2001 further increased fees by approximately 40 percent to more closely reflect the facility operator's stated cost of maintaining operations. This amendment further increases fees in the aggregate by approximately 17 percent. The new fees reflect the cost to maintain operations and compliance with state laws requiring longer holding periods including owned animals. DPH determined that continuation of this contract is the most cost effective route even though impound rates are approximately 27% higher than other contract shelters. Having a shelter located in this region allows Animal Control Officers (ACO) to spend more time in the field responding to citizen calls. Transporting the stray animals to other contract shelters or the County operated shelter in Devore can take up to three hours of ACO time per trip, thus reducing animal control services to the public, and increasing costs for staff time and vehicle charges. Additionally, these shelters simply do not have the room to impound the animals originating from this region. Accepting any additional animals at these facilities will cause severe over-crowding in the already over-capacity kennels.

VVAPL handled 9,958 animals during FY 2000 through FY 2003 at a cost of \$247,476. This Contract is for the period July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: This item was reviewed by HSS Contracts, (Lori Ciabattini, Administrative Supervisor) on May 19, 2003, County Counsel (Scott Runyan, Deputy County Counsel) on June 9, 2003, HSS Finance Department, and the County Administrative Office (Beatriz Valdez, Administrative Analyst) on June 16, 2003.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Approval of this Contract imposes no cost to the County, as the \$10,000 contract increase will be covered through licensing and other fee revenue. The contract expenditures are included in the DPH proposed FY 2003-2004 budget.

Cost Reduction Review: The County Administrative Office has reviewed this item and recommends approval, as the Contract imposes no cost to the County.

SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT (S): First District; Second District

PRESENTER: James A. Felten, Public Health Programs Administrator, Department of Public Health, (909) 387-9146

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